

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

ERDA-05 ACDA-05 /077 W

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R 111925Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6419

INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

SECDEF

CINCPAC

CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCPACFLT

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 17361

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, UK, SN, US

SUBJECT: U.S. NAVAL USE OF SINGAPORE NAVAL FACILITIES

REF: STATE 265844

1. WE HAVE MADE AN APPOINTMENT TO SEE BEVAN, HEAD OF FCO SOUTHWEST PACIFIC DEPARTMENT, ON NOVEMBER 12 TO PRESENT U.S. RESPONSE TO UK PROPOSAL ON SINGAPORE NAVAL FACILITIES. WE ARE SURE THAT UK WILL BE READY TO PROCEED SOONEST ALONG LINES PARA (2) REFTEL AND WILL CONFIRM THIS AFTER OUR MEETING TOMORROW.

2. WE WERE PLEASED THAT REFTEL DOES NOT PRECLUDE FORWARD MOVEMENT ON GENERAL FACILITIES IF BRITISH FEEL STRONGLY THAT NPW QUESTION MUST BE SEPARATED FROM REST OF PACKAGE FOR TIME BEING. BRITISH ARE WELL AWARE OF IMPORTANCE OF EARLY, SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF NPW ACCESS TO SINGAPORE ON FREEST POSSIBLE BASIS. IN ALL PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT FCO AND MOD OFFICIALS HAVE TAKEN THE INITIATIVE TO BE SURE THAT
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U.S./UK APPROACH TO GOS INCLUDES ADEQUATE ACCESS FOR

NPW'S. THE CHIEF FACTOR IN THEIR RELUCTANCE TO APPROACH NEW ZEALAND FOR HELP WAS THEIR JUDGEMENT THAT NPW ACCESS TO SINGAPORE MIGHT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED.

3. IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS BRITISH HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR CONCERN THAT ATTEMPT TO SOLVE NPW QUESTIONS PROBABLY WOULD DELAY FINAL AGREEMENT ON OVERALL ACCESS AND MIGHT, ONLY BECAUSE OF THE TIME FACTOR, JEOPARDIZE ENTIRE U.S./UK PLAN FOR FACILITIES RETENTION. THE BRITISH BELIEVE THAT THE GOS HAS NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO NPW VISITS; AND THAT SOLUTION OF THE NPW SITUATION IS ONLY A MATTER OF WORKING OUT PROCEDURES AND DETAILS.

4. OUR ASSESQMENT IS THAT THE BRITISH WOULD AGREE TO KEEP THE NPW ISSUE AND GENERAL QUESTION OF FACILITIES LINKED IF THE U.S. PRESSED VERY HARD BUT THAT HMG CONSIDERATION OF THIS QUESTION WOULD TAKE TIME FURTHER DELAYING THE PROJECT. WE SENSE THAT THE BRITISH ARE BECOMING CONCERNED ABOUT THE ACTUAL PROBLEMS IN SINGAPORE WHIAH OCCUR AS THEY TRY TO MOVE MEN AND MATERIAL OUT IN THE ABSENCE OF TECHNICAL TALKS ENVISIONED IN REFTEL.

5. IN OUR DISCUSSION WITH BEVAN WE WILL STRESS THE GREAT IMPORTANCE OF SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF THE NPW QUESTION AND OUR STRONG DESIRE NOT TO SEPARATE NPW FROM OTHER ISSUES. BUT, PURSUANT TO PARA (6) REFTEL, WE WILL NOT INDICATE THAT THE U.S. WILL IN NO CIRCUMSTANCES ACCEPT SEPARATION OF THE ISSUES.

RICHARDSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUELING, MILITARY POLICIES, NAVAL SHIPS, ACCESS TO PORTS, PORT FACILITIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LONDON17361
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750392-0923
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751155/aaaabwyb.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 265844
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <05 NOV 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. NAVAL USE OF SINGAPORE NAVAL FACILITIES
TAGS: MARR, PFOR, UK, SN, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006